



## **LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES**

**April 14, 2010**

**BOARD PRESENT:** Bailey, Brodsky, Bryant, Chiles, Dickerson, Howard, Kim, Lewis, J., Lewis, O., Neuman, Riccardi, Sheriff-Merchant

**STAFF PRESENT:** Parker Hamilton, Director; Barbara Webb, Chief, Technology and Collection Management; Suzanne Carbone, Manager, Virtual Services; Regina Holyfield-Jewett, Recording Secretary

**GUEST:** Matthew Fink, Friends of the Library, Montgomery County

The Library Board meeting was convened by Chair Brodsky at 7:05 p.m.

### **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

Minutes from the March 10, 2010 meeting were approved.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Fines/Fees:

Director Hamilton introduced Suzanne Carbone, Manager of Virtual Services and Interlibrary Loan. Ms. Carbone brings proposals before the Board regarding fees/fines. The approval of fines/fees falls within the purview of the Library Board.

In January 2009, Director Hamilton asked for a thorough review of the entire Interlibrary Loan section, its functions and operations. From this review, a number of recommendations were made to improve the efficiency of the unit. There are two areas that are being brought to the Board's attention.

One of them is a fee of \$1 charged for Interlibrary Loan materials returned without their identifying bands – green band or white band. The reason this is being requested is that these bands have the essential information that identifies the material, the lender and the borrower. These bands are the only way of identifying material as Interlibrary Loan items. There are increased incidents of loss of

expensive materials because customers are now allowed to return the items via the book drop and very often they do not have the identifying band(s) on them.

Some of the materials that MCPL borrows are very expensive and rare. If it cannot be proven that the borrower is responsible for losing the item, then MCPL has to pay for the materials. They may average \$50 to \$150 an item.

It is also a matter of staff workload. Staff cannot identify the item as an ILL unless the bands are there. The bands contain the information necessary for check in of materials and their progression through the normal return process.

If the customer contests the fact that they returned the item, and it has no green band, it is an increase in staff workload throughout the system, since a request must be made for staff to look for the material in the branch, before it is reported as lost to the lender. Customers do contest lost items even when they acknowledge that they have returned them without the identifying bands.

To insure that borrowers receive credit for returning an ILL item, they must not remove the lending label on the book. Customers are requesting receipts for the items returned and that MCPL have a more accountable system. It is a matter of customers receiving credit when they return the items.

Other library systems around the country not only charge for this kind of issue, but other issues - one of which will be addressed in the second recommendation.

The \$1.00 fee will encourage borrowers to take care of Interlibrary Loan materials for which they and MCPL are responsible. Staff is in favor of this recommendation.

Another part of the policy change is having customers return the items to the circulation desk and obtaining a receipt.

The biggest harm is that lenders are choosing not to let MCPL borrow their materials, because we have such an awful record of lost materials.

*Discussion was held regarding adding pockets to the materials; charging a deposit to be returned when the item is returned with the band; if \$1 is a sufficient deterrent; should the fee be increased from \$1 before implementation; how will this be imposed, etc.*

A motion was made by Chair Brodsky to institute the \$1 fine for ILL items returned without the band(s) with a status report in six months. The motion was seconded by David Chiles. By majority vote, the motion carried.

The second item is a \$5 fee for each Online Computer Library Center, Inc (OCLC) request. OCLC books are the most expensive. They are borrowed from academic institutions throughout the entire country. Generally, the items that become lost are OCLC materials. Many systems around the country are charging for these requests. This may be a way of encouraging customers to think twice about the value of these materials and the fact that they are responsible for them.

It is not only the loss of these materials, but the cost involved in mailing these materials back on a consistent basis. The ILL staff processes an average of 500 OCLC requests a month, an amount equal to that of some academic libraries. There is no technical mechanism to limit the number of holds for OCLC requests per user. There are two reasons for asking for this recommendation: 1) a

fee of \$5.00 will limit whimsical requests and assist in reducing the workload for the 25 hour a week library technician who manages OCLC requests and 2) it will help to defray the costs of mailing the borrowed materials back to the lending institution.

There has been a significant increase in items borrowed between the years 2006 and 2009 – an increase of 81%. This is due to the fact that people are discovering “new” items via internet sites. It is very difficult to keep up.

Question: What would happen if MCPL opted out of OCLC?

Answer: Users would be deprived of some of the materials that traditionally have been some of the most heavily used material in ILL. Suzanne has conducted a study of borrowing policies in this region and found that customers are not able to walk into these institutions and borrow the materials. They do not allow direct borrowing. It would be deprivation for the sophisticated customer base in Montgomery County.

*Discussion was held regarding the \$5 fee being a barrier to students borrowing materials. It was determined that it was not students who were borrowing these items, but writers, scientists, etc.*

This proposed fee for OCLC requests would not include articles.

When the review of ILL was begun, Suzanne Carbone wanted to purchase a service from OCLC called ILLiad. This service is a customer initiated service which would allow customers to not only initiate the request, but to also track the request. The service would allow limitation on requests, but was not compatible with SIRSI.

*Discussion was held regarding the OCLC process. What happens once the item is returned? Other options were also discussed.*

It was moved and seconded that the \$5 fee for each OCLC request be implemented. The motion carried. Chair Brodsky asked Suzanne Carbone to report back to the Board in six months after the \$5 fee has been implemented.

## **DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

MCPL’s **operating budget** was before the **Health and Human Services (HHS) Committee** of the County Council on April 11. Chair Brodsky asked that members who attended the HHS Committee work session give an overview.

The HHS Committee is a subcommittee of the County Council who has purview over reviewing MCPL’s budget. The Council staff goes through the budget and makes recommendations to the Committee members. George Leventhal, Nancy Navarro and Duchy Trachtenberg comprise the HHS Committee.

At the April 11 work session, only two Committee members were present – Councilmembers Leventhal and Navarro. Councilmember Leventhal said that historically they take the recommendations of the departments, but they were not going to do that this year. This year everything is on the table because the budget is so horrible.

It was learned yesterday that there is a \$168M gap that must be closed before the FY11 budget is adopted. Councilmember Leventhal stated that Council and staff will be determining how to close the \$168M gap.

The Council feels that people are using their access to the County Executive to side-step what the Council is doing right now in terms of the budget.

The Council is thinking about having one agency manager manage two or more branches. The feeling is that the branch managers are making more money than the frontline staff.

The Committee acknowledged that MCPL has had its budget cut substantially over the past few years. They also acknowledge that Libraries' budget cuts have been disproportionate to other County departments, but still are moving forward with additional cuts.

The Committee also acknowledged receiving many communications from residents in support of Libraries, but is still moving forward with additional cuts.

The accessibility to Rockville Library and the new Silver Spring Library by persons with disabilities was also presented by the Committee as a concern that Council would like studied.

Also mentioned was the inability of persons holding political functions to book the meeting rooms in the Libraries.

The elimination of Sunday Service hours was proposed. Council staff was charged with drafting three scenarios that would include keeping Sunday Service hours as proposed by the Executive, decreasing the hours and eliminating Sunday Service hours.

Union leadership was represented at the table during the April 11 work session.

The Council analyst for Public Libraries, Essie McGuire, did a really good job of presenting a very balanced approach to Libraries' packet.

The County does have a \$168M gap that needs to be closed. It was very clear that Council was looking for money from Public Libraries' budget. It was also clear that they felt that the represented employees needed to be given some relief. Therefore, they were looking at the management positions. There is a chart in the packet showing managers, non-represented. Councilmember Navarro kept referring to these positions. The role of managers was explained to the Committee. It was stated that when positions are looked at to be abolished; the work is reviewed. The managers not only manage, but they work the public service desks. In the current environment, the managers usually work more hours than the Union staff due to Union guidelines. MCPL will have an opportunity to participate in the discussion. Essie McGuire will be asking questions of MCPL as she makes this packet available to Mr. Leggett to make a decision about having a manager manage more than one branch.

Salaries of library staff were studied; there are about 24 Librarian IIs who make more money than the agency managers and about four who make more money than the public services administrators. It will not save more money to eliminate managerial positions as opposed to frontline staff positions. It may be the principle, that Council feels there are too many managers in County government. This sentiment has also been expressed by the Union.

If Sunday Service hours are cut, there will be more reductions in staff.

*A discussion was held regarding the Library Board's role in relationship to the Union and to County Council. It was agreed that the Board would continue to meet individually with the Councilmembers. The message will be that the Board is outraged at the position the Committee has taken regarding the managers in Libraries and the dissolution of Sunday hours.*

The recommendations on Sunday hours and managers will be brought back to the HHS Committee work session on April 21.

Director Hamilton has attended a number of FOL and LAC meetings and has heard more than once that they feel a lack of coordination and a lack of information coming from the Library Board this year regarding the budget process. They want to be more involved, they want more guidance, they want good communication, they want to work – they want guidance from the Board. They want up front information so that they can actively participate.

A proposal was received from the **Noyes Children's Library** Foundation with a plan to partner with the Friends of the Library, Montgomery County and the Town of Kensington to raise money in order to renovate the Noyes Library. They would like the library to remain open until it gets closer to renovation. In order for this to happen, they want to bring back the Noyes Foundation public partnership with the Library Department. They propose to pay some of the personnel cost and probably some of the collection cost to keep the library open. The proposal was presented to the County Executive who likes the concept, but wants it to be budget neutral. They will be a meeting next week with the Mayor of Kensington, the Noyes Foundation, the County Attorney, and a budget representative to see if something can be worked out.

Councilmember Leventhal was very happy with the **\$1 fee for the non-pickup of holds**. He thought the fee should be higher and suggested \$10. Director Hamilton explained that MCPL is a public library system and therefore free, and a great deal of money cannot be charged for the non-pickup of holds, but she stated that she would bring it back to the Board.

The Board agreed that the fee would remain \$1. Chair Brodsky will send a letter to Councilmember Leventhal communicating this.

The **furlough plan** for FY11 is for every County employee to be furloughed for eighty hours. The five fixed days and five floating days originally proposed has changed. The eighty hours can now be taken in increments of one hour or more.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **Annual Meeting**

The Annual meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 12, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Public officials will be involved in presenting the LAC awards. The presentation of the awards will begin at 10:00 a.m. Speakers for the meeting will include: IMLS representative; staff from Storyville in Baltimore County; Josh Greenberg, DIY Scanning; author Marilyn Johnson.

The deadline for the **LAC awards** was changed from April 1 to April 15.

## **LAC BUSINESS:**

### **LAC Assignments**

Karen Howard	Gaithersburg
Paulette Dickerson	MCCF, CRC and Noyes
David Chiles	Quince Orchard and White Oak
Raeesa Sheriff-Merchant	Kensington Park and Potomac
Kay Kim	Long Branchd and Marilyn Praisner
Otto Lewis	FOL, Olney and Chevy Chase

Karen Miller, Agency Manager at Damascus, mentioned to Director Hamilton that the LAC is happy that Frank Riccardi is their liaison, and he is greatly appreciated.

### **LAC Applications**

The applications submitted for LAC memberships were unanimously approved.

### **LAC Updates.**

The National Issues Forum was held at **Chevy Chase** on March 23. There were fifteen participants who were involved in a lively discussion regarding news media and society. Other forums are planned for May and June if any other LACs are interested.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

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B. Parker Hamilton